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PROCEEDINGS OF THE PARIS ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY.*

THE Paris Anthropological Society held on the 8th of June an extraordinary meeting, which was followed by a banquet, in the Salon de Lemardelay, when a pleasing incident occurred. At the dessert the Secretary received the following telegraphic message :—

“ Francfort-sur-le-Mein, June 8, 1865.

“ *Salut à la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris. Les fondateurs réunis des Archives Allemandes d'Anthropologie.*

“ De Baer, Desor, Ecker, His, Lindenschmit, Lucae, Rüttimeyer, Schaaflhausen, Vogt, Welcker, Vieweg.

The news of the foundation of a new periodical devoted to Anthropology was received with great applause. An immediate reply by telegraph was sent to the following effect :—

“ *Les anthropologistes français, à table, aux anthropologistes allemands, merci, salut et fraternité.*”

Report on the prize Ernest Godard, of the value of 500 francs, awarded to Dr. Gillebert d'Hercourt, of Monaco, read by M. Simonot.

Our colleague Ernest Godard, (commenced M. Simonot) died on September 21, 1862, at Jaffa, exhausted by the fatigues of a long and toilsome voyage which he had undertaken in the interest of science. On his death-bed he did not forget the Anthropological Society, of which he was one of the founders.

“ I bequeath,” he says in his will, “ to the Anthropological Society the sum of 5,000 francs, the interest of which is to constitute a prize, to be awarded every second year to the author of the best memoir on any subject relating to anthropology.”

This is the first time that an opportunity is afforded to us to act in conformity to his bequest. Six Memoirs have been sent in competing for the *Prix Godard*, bearing the following titles :—

No. 1. On the importance of the black race, and its part in humanity.

No. 2. A printed Memoir by Dr. Joulin, entitled, *Anatomie et physiologie comparée du bassin, etc.*, extracted from the Archives Générales de Médecine.

No. 3. A printed Memoir by M. E. Koeberlé, entitled, *Essai sur le Crétinisme.*

No. 4. A manuscript Memoir by M. Gillebert d'Hercourt, entitled,

* Continued from vol. v, p. 364.

Mensurations opérés sur 76 indigènes de l'Afrique française et sur 2 Chinois.

No. 5. A printed Memoir by Dr. Morel, entitled, *De la formation du type dans les variétés dégénérées, ou nouveaux éléments d'Anthropologie morbide pour faire suite à la théorie des dégénérescences dans l'espèce humaine.*

No. 6. A manuscript Memoir, written in English, entitled, *Comparative Psychology*, sent by Mr. Charles Wake.

M. Simonot then proceeded to read an analysis of each essay sent in for competition, commencing with the essay on Cretinism, by M. Koeberle.

According to M. Koeberle, the primary cause of Cretinism is a diffusible agent, the existence of which coincides with the geological formations of certain localities and the mineral constituents of the water, and is in some respects analogous to the miasmata producing intermittent and typhoid fevers. Dr. Morel, in his treatise on degenerations, has already said that Cretinism is caused by the special action of a poisonous principle on the cerebro-spinal system, which miasma is somehow connected with the soil where magnesian limestone abounds, though it cannot absolutely be affirmed that Cretinism may not be met with in other geological formations. M. Koeberle looks upon goître and Cretinism as two distinct morbid conditions, since, in a great number of localities, goître is, and has been for a long time, prevalent, without the co-existence of Cretinism, which, in his opinion, is developed by the influence of an air vitiated by a miasma *sui generis*, whilst the excessive use of certain waters gives rise to goître. Cretinism seems at present to be unknown in North America, Australia, Africa, Oceania, where, nevertheless, goître has been observed. M. Koeberle is, therefore, of opinion that Cretinism is not an affection special to any race.

On the formation of type in degenerated varieties, by M. Morel.—This essay is merely a sequel to Dr. Morel's work on physical, intellectual, and moral degeneration; being, so to speak, a personification of the ideas expressed in his larger treatise. Given a morbid principle inherent in the constitution of the progenitors, this principle, if nothing opposes its transmission, becomes in the descendants the commencement of a series of successive pathological phenomena, inducing the progressive decay of a family, or may be of a whole race. The degenerated being is thus a morbid individuality in which are accumulated all the elements which have altered the constitution of a series of ancestors, by disturbing the evolution of their faculties and vitiated their instincts. But apart from the general characters belonging to all degenerated individuals of the same species, there exist parate characters belonging to individuals of different varieties.

Such being M. Morel's starting point, his object is to establish, from the physiognomy, the external and internal forms of the degenerated, the nature of these particular characters, to trace the morbid hereditaryness to which they must be attributed, in short, to study the hereditary transmissions which have produced the formation of a type in degenerated varieties and their laws. For the better illustration of his principles, M. Morel added to his treatise three plates representing three sisters, the daughters of parents of a neuropathic condition, and a fourth plate representing two sisters, the daughters of parents given to alcoholic excesses and etiolated by want of proper nourishment.

On the importance of the black race, and its rôle in humanity.—The author, says M. Simonot, puts aside the interminable question of the origin of the human races, but, taking the Negro as he finds him, maintains that the black race is as indispensable to the general harmony as the white race. Of all the differences subsisting between the races of men, that of the colour of the skin appeared to him the most important, so that he would feel disposed to adopt it as the base of a classification, without, however, excluding the other characters, such as prognathism, woolly hair, etc. This dichotomy of the human species in two fundamental types—the pure white and the pure black, the other colours being only intermediate gradations—appeared to him the more acceptable, inasmuch as these two types inhabit perfectly distinct regions of the globe. He considers that a race which can only live in certain regions, to the exclusion of other races, is for these regions the superior race, owing this superiority precisely to the conditions which elsewhere would cause its inferiority. Where a race can only maintain itself by excessive precautions, they have only a factitious existence, resembling hot-house plants. This is demonstrated by the success attending colonisations of the whites in temperate zones, and their failure in inter-tropical regions. In the Havanas, Martinique, Vera-Cruz, Bahia, etc., the white race can only maintain itself on condition of following sedentary, commercial, or industrial pursuits, and still they require reinforcements from the mother countries. As to the cultivation of the soil, it has always been the appanage of the Negro, whether native or imported, an aptitude which is not attained either by the red or yellow populations, which this author considers as derived from the white type. Now, as the abolition of the slave trade precludes the white man from exacting forced labour from the Negro race, the best means to be adopted are to civilise the Negro, and to make him participate in its benefits. This treatise, observed M. Simonot, is written in a very elegant and lucid style, and denotes in the author firm convictions and generous aspirations. No doubt some of the theories contained in this memoir may appear very questionable,

such, for instance, as the predilection of the author for the colourisation of the skin as a basis for classification, or his idea of the derivation of the red and yellow races from the white type, or, finally, his idea that the cross-breeds of the Negro and the white are the predestined inhabitants of localities intermediate between hot and temperate regions. To discuss them would have led too far; he, therefore, confined himself to merely indicating these questions.

Comparative Psychology. By M. C. S. Wake.—In this treatise, the author endeavours to demonstrate, what no one contests, that in the series of animals their superiority results from more perfect development of the nervous system. The author gives a minute analysis of the intellectual acts of man compared with those of animals, in order to establish the superiority of man. We are unable, concluded M. Simonot, to give an analysis of this psychological dissertation without entering into details. But whatever may be the interest attached to works of this nature, they do not appear to us to give a great impulse to the study of anthropology.

Measurements and observations made on seventy-six natives of French Africa. By M. Gillebert d'Hercourt.—It is not without embarrassment, said M. Simonot, that we approach the examination of this memoir. It is not our task to follow the author in his developments and to appreciate the logic of his deductions. We have before us a collection of figures, imposing in their number, the enumeration of which must fatigue your attention without much enlightening you as to their value.

For each of these groups the author has prepared a table, indicating for each individual, age, sex, colour of the skin of the covered and uncovered parts of the body, the diameter and curves of the head, forming for each individual a total of thirty-three measurements. . . . The author also offers some observations on the colouration of the hair, eyes, and skin, of the structure of the feet and hands, and the resisting power to cold possessed by the Arabs and Kabyles. The hair of the Arabs is generally black, sometimes nut-brown or auburn. That of the Negroes is a jet black, and presents the peculiarity that it only becomes crisp when it has reached a certain length. Large and horizontally slit, the eyes of the Arabs are more or less dark brown, exceptionally there are seen green eyes. The eyes of the Kabyles are of a much lighter colour; when grey they coincide with a notable whiteness of the skin, red hair and freckles. In the Negroes, the eyes are frequently so dark that it becomes impossible to distinguish the pupil of the iris.

The Arabs of Algeria are distinguished into Town-Arabs or Moors, and Tribe-Arabs. In the former, the skin is of a lighter colour, in the latter it is bronzed, or nearly black. This is partly the effect of

differences in habitation and dress existing between the Moors and the Tribe-Arabs. As regards the extremities, the hand is characterised by want of suppleness and restricted extension, the effect, no doubt, of field labour, which chiefly engages the prehensive muscles. The feet are rather flat, and considerably widened at the anterior part. The Arab, in walking, turns his great toe outward. Among the Moors the toes are more or less close to each other, and curve downwards, so that in some mountaineers they assume the form of claws. Either the habit of walking barefoot, or the shape of Algerian foot-gear, may account for this.

It has caused some surprise that Algerian troops support so well the rigours of a Parisian winter. The fact is that in the hilly districts of Algeria dry frost alternates with snow-storms, whilst in the valleys abundant rains give rise to a very disagreeable cold temperature. The variations in temperature in some parts are very great, which the Arab supports better than the European. Thus, his epidermic resistance acquires an energy, which we rarely find among our citizens. The memoir also contains a table representing various modes of tattooing. From some of the forms, the crucial, for instance, on the forehead, the Christian origin of the Kabyles has been inferred. But, in the first place, it is not always seen in the Kabyles, whilst it is met with among the Arabs of the south, who are Mussulmans. . . . M. Simonot concluded in the following terms:—Whilst fully recognising the merits of the pathological studies of MM. Morel and Koeberle, and appreciating the value of the researches of M. Goulin, M. Wake, and the author of the anonymous treatise, we felt justified in awarding the “Prix Godard” to M. Gillebert d’Hericourt, whose eminently practical essay is in complete accord with the anthropological instructions which the society has adopted as the programme of its studies.

M. Gillebert d’Hericourt, in thanking the Society for having awarded to him the “Prix Godard,” expressed a wish to receive it in the shape of a gold medal.

M. Bonté observed that such a precedent might be very embarrassing to some future laureates who might prefer hard cash.

M. Sanson could understand that a laureate might prefer a medal, but, as he also shares M. Bonté’s doubts, he would propose a silver-gilt or bronze medal, and the surplus in money, a mode now frequently adopted.

Consulted by the President, the Society agreed to deliver to M. d’Hericourt his prize in the shape of a gold medal, unless he preferred the combination proposed by M. Sanson.

M. Henri Martin addressed a note to the Society relative to some observations attributed to him by M. Lagneau in his summary on anthropology in France.